

August 2004

Volume 1, Issue 8



The Challengers



*The Challengers Family Readiness Group, M-158 Aviation Maintenance Company,
Building 7016, Second Floor, HAAF, Box 81, Fort Hood, Texas 76544-5081, (877) 620-4187*

Individual Highlights

Page 1

From the Commander

Page 2

From the 1SG

M158 Website

From the RDO

Page 3

Home Front Reports

Fund Raising

*Federal Voting
Assistance Program*

USA Cares

Mailing Address

Free Classified Ads

Page 4

Resources and Contacts

From the Commander

Another month is almost gone and we continue to do very well with our mission. We celebrated the 4th of July with a safety stand down day. This included some classes on different areas in which we could improve safety awareness plus some food and entertainment. We had a big cookout with the best food available here in Iraq and a talent show featuring some of our own soldiers. The company was tasked recently to sponsor a USO group called "Insoul". They perform R&B and Jazz music and they came out of California. We provided them transportation, and security, plus assisted with the set up of their equipment. I was asked to provide the introduction for the group and many soldiers from M-Company attended. I feel like it was a very fun event for the soldiers and I hope we get another opportunity to do something like that. It was a nice change in our daily routine.

The R&R program is still going full blast and I anticipate getting a full allocation for August as well. This combined with the pass program provides a much needed break for the soldiers. I appreciate all of your patience regarding the often changing dates for leave. I know this has been frustrating for many of the soldiers and I can only apologize and tell you the leave slots are given to me and I have no say on the exact dates. Typically a soldier who requests a specific month will get that month but pinning it down to an exact date is difficult to do. I still have to ensure we have enough soldiers available to perform the mission while many of our people are on leave. Nevertheless, leave is good and most everyone takes the 'red tape' with a grain of salt and the soldier attitude of "Hey it's better than no leave at all".

I always appreciate a positive attitude because I think it helps the soldiers to cope with the deployment better. We receive a great deal of cards and letters from folks back home supporting us and this does raise our morale. We appreciate the prayers and support and thank you all for your service back home.

Lonnie Slade
MAJ, AV
Commanding

From the First Sergeant

By 1SG Jay Huseman

We had a good time the fourth of July. The Food was good, just not enough of it. M co soldiers swept all events. The talent show was won by SPC Knight, SPC Henry, SPC Hunt and SPC Russell. They preformed an Ike and Tina Turner review and brought the house down. The domino tournament was won by SSG Nauls. The basketball tournament went to SPC Squires and SPC McNair with a soldier from L co rounding out the squad. SGT Ford and SGT Anders killed the competition in the spades tournament. The promotion board was held last month and 27 Specialists were selected for Sergeant and 13 Sergeants were selected for Staff Sergeant. We are now just waiting on the orders. Your soldiers are working hard, getting the job done and staying safe. You all should be proud of each and every one.

M158 Website

The Challenger, pictures of our soldiers, FRG and unit contact information is now available online.

Visit us at:

www.hood.army.mil/13coscom
Click the FRG link , then the link to the 158th Aviation site.

Submit suggestions, pictures, articles, comments, etc. to the FRG Newsletter Editor.

From the RDO

By CPT Ed A. Escobedo

As M Company Rear Detachment Commander, I just wanted to take this time to touch base with you. It is hoped this newsletter finds you and your loved ones doing well.

For those of you that do not know me, I'm Capt. Ed A. Escobedo. My history with 158th goes back to 1990-1995. I served under 90th ARCOM, 28th AVN GRP, and A/1/158th AVN REGT in the DFW area. Out of these units the 244th AVN BDE was founded, splinter groups would found 7/158th and M Company.

Well, enough about me because I am most interested in you and your families. I want to extend my sincere appreciation for the hard work and devotion you are all dedicating to the families of M Company 158th and the Unit. As we move forward through these emotional and sometimes overwhelming times, let us keep each other in mind. We have a great Family Readiness Group in place that has yet to reach its full potential.

I am here to assist the M Company 158th families as best as I can with the resources and time I have available. I will

also do my best to fulfill this privilege along with the other Rear Detachment Commander duties. So, I want to provide you my contact numbers: Office 254-287-6416, Toll Free 1-877-620-4187, Cell 254-338-7960.

My staff is also available to assist you to the best of their ability and resources. They are as follows:

Executive Officer: CW2 John D. Crane at 254-287-3492/254-288-1755,

Acting First Sergeant: MSG David L. Wesley at 254-287-8340,

Unit Administrator: Mr. Monte A. Schrader at 254-254-8590,

Unit Administrator: Ms. Stacia L. Pace at 254-287-8325.

On a final note, as we move towards the upcoming Holiday Seasons, I would like to coordinate family gatherings. Please provide your suggestions to your FRG Tree Contact leaders. Let us know how you and your loved ones are doing.

God Speed,
Ed A. Escobedo, CPT, AV
Rear Det Commander

Home Front Reporters

Soldiers and their families like to know what's happening at home. The Challengers Newsletter needs volunteers from each of our soldier's "home units" to contribute monthly articles. Submissions would include drill schedules, post activities, family announcements, local news, etc. If you would like more information, please contact the newsletter editor at m158.frgnewsletter@us.army.mil or call (877) 620-4187.

Fund Raising

Magnetic ribbons are still available in your choice of yellow or red, white, & blue. Contact an FRG member to purchase. If you have an idea for a fund-raiser, please forward your suggestion to your telephone tree contact or the FRG Leader. Thanks to everyone for your continued support!



Federal Voting Assistance Program

The 2004 General Election is quickly approaching. If you and/or your family are overseas this year and would like to exercise your right to vote but are unsure about how to do so, you can find all the information you need at <http://www.fvap.gov/>. Don't forget, you must apply for your absentee ballot using the hard copy of the Federal Post Card Application. You can download this form at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/onlinefpga.html>.

USA Cares

USA Cares, a nonprofit organization started in part from assistance from the AUSA Fort Knox chapter is run entirely by volunteers, and is committed to helping families who have run into financial troubles while their family member serves the country. USA Cares helps to direct families to military and other charitable organizations or corporate sponsors looking for ways to support American troops. For more information about USA Cares, visit www.usacare.us or you can visit the Fort Knox Chapter website at <http://www.fortknoxusa.org/>

Mailing Address

The address to be used for our soldiers is:

Soldier's Name & Rank
M158th AVN, Platoon #
(Platoon # is optional)
APO AE 09391

What should I send?

Books and magazines
Hometown newspapers
CD's
DVD's
Pre-sweetened Tea, Kool-Aid, Gatorade, etc
Coffee
Nuts

Free Classified Ads

The Military Family Network has launched free classifieds to help military families connect with each other and trade or sell their items at no cost. The network wishes to support all the work from home crafters and those wishing to just swap the old for something different. It is also a way to connect. There are no fees to post homemade crafts and it is an excellent way to build a home based family business. The option is also available for Family Support Groups for fund raising and other organizations wishing to list and support their missions. Email cpeabody@emilitary.org for more information or register and begin listing your classifieds on <http://www.emilitary.org/classifieds/>

The Challengers

Family Readiness Group
M-158 AVIM Co

Bldg 7016, Box 81
Hood Army Airfield
Fort Hood, Texas
76544-5081

PHONE:
(877) 620-4187
(24 hr answering machine)
(254) 288-6113
FAX:
(254) 288-3236

E-MAIL:
**M158.frgnewsletter@
us.army.mil**

FRG Leaders

Leader: Kelly Huseman

Secretary: Tracy Pederson

Treasurer: Tina Risenhoover

Telephone Tree: Julie Lee

Fundraising: Tammy Hench

Newsletter: Becky Cotton

Sponsorship: Jane Dennis

Historian: Need Volunteer

Events: Tracy Pederson

Database: Julie Lee
Becky Cotton

Advisor: Need Volunteer

Published by:

Becky Cotton
Editor

Approved by:

Lonnie Slade
Major, U.S Army

Resources and Contacts

Contact a Family Readiness Group member if you have questions or need information.

Your FRG contact name and phone: _____

For additional assistance, contact the unit resources below.

Rear Detachment Commander:	CPT Escobedo	(254) 287-6416 (877) 620-4187
Executive officer:	CW2 Crane	(254) 287-3492 (254) 288-1755
Acting First Sergeant:	MSG Wesley	(254) 287-8590
Unit Administrator:	Mr. Schrader	(254) 287-8590
	Ms. Pace	(254) 287-8325
Rear Detachment Fax Number:		(254) 287-8339

TRICARE Information:	http://tricare.osd.mil	(800) 406-2832
Dental-United Concordia:		(800) 866-8499
Army One Source (www.armyonesource.com):		(800) 464-8107

**** Remember: Pay issues MUST be initiated by the soldier. ****

From the Editor

Let us know how we can make the newsletter and website more useful to you!

Submit photos taken during the deployment for publication on the web page and/or newsletter! Photos must be submitted electronically and should include names of soldiers shown.

Send contributions, suggestions, and comments to:
M158.frgnewsletter@us.army.mil